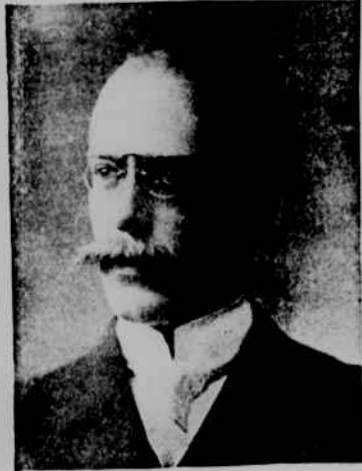


HOFFMAN BROTHERS.

EVERY successful business man, or firm furnishes a lesson to the generation that is to come after if the methods pursued are only intelligently studied, and with this object in view it is interesting to follow for a moment the career of a busy and wonderfully successful real estate firm. True, it is one of many stanch firms in Greater New-York; but it has won success along a different line of procedure. Charles F. Hoffman, jr., and William M. V. Hoffman formed their present partnership in the real estate business in 1884. Contrary to the law of association which has all along served to make of Liberty-st. the realty centre of New-York City, the new firm decided to strike out on an isolated line and a perfectly independent policy. The brothers reached the conclusion that a division of schooled ability along many



CHARLES F. HOFFMAN, JR.



W. M. V. HOFFMAN.

branches of the same pursuit meant only measurable success, with more than a possibility of doing business in no single line. Therefore they decided to adhere to the business of buying and selling realty. They went further than that. They held that in so large a territory as that of Manhattan Island, with its wide diversities of values, the chances of success were greater for strict attention to the growth of a particular locality, and they fixed upon lower Broadway and the great drygoods district as the centre of their best efforts. With rare exceptions they have kept to this determination. While they have not refused to act for a customer in the disposal of uptown property, they have never sought for that kind of business, and so that the man upon the ground was better able to judge of conditions than any one removed from the locality. In Broadway no change in condition has presented itself with which they have not grappled and made its secrets their own. This care and attention have borne fruit in a ripe knowledge of property values and possibilities of growth in the great wholesale centre of the city, which lends to any word of counsel they may give a peculiar significance. Again, in the furtherance of their design to take a new direction they withdrew from the real estate trade centre and fixed their offices further uptown at Nos. 140 and 142 Warren-st., for they had firmly proposed not to be drawn aside from their intention. In a sense they were innovators upon established order, and it is the more gratifying to them that account to record that their departure was successful. Owing to their grasp on common sense and their knowledge of property values, they finally secured what many others had sought in vain. They won the confidence of the managers of the great Weld estate of Boston, and in the course of a series of years have sold to them New-York business properties to the value of nearly \$11,000,000. One of their recent sales was Nos. 707 and 709 Broadway for John T. Williams to the Weld estate for about \$800,000. Another was that of Nos. 165 and 167 Broadway for the same estate for nearly \$500,000. During the year 1895, among other important transactions that come to mind, they sold the Hotel Legerot, at Fifth-ave and Eighteenth-st., for less than that came to mind, they sold the Hotel Legerot, at Fifth-ave and Eighteenth-st., for less than \$400,000 to A. D. Pell. They disposed of the property Nos. 622, 624 and 626 Broadway, at Croton-st., for \$750,000. A year ago they sold the property on the northeast corner of Broome and Mercer sts. for \$225,000, and the northeast corner of Broadway and Howard-st. first for \$250,000 and within a week again for \$325,000.

E. A. CRUIKSHANK & CO.

IN a city so old as New-York and famed for historic associations it is not strange to find business firms with titles that carry back to the younger century; but there are not a great number holding the position of century distinction. One of these is the real estate firm of E. A. Cruikshank & Co., No. 176 Broadway, and the history of the institution which has descended through the various wearers of the family name is well-nigh a history of the growth of real estate values in the city of New-York. The house was established by the grandfather, he being succeeded by his son, the late James Cruikshank, who died at the age of ninety-two, and who was succeeded by his children, the firm. The very accounts of property long since forming incidents are there. Because of its uninter-business the firm has a vast estates that is unpassed through so many business, the firm enjoyed of selection of business opportunity so presented then that it was enabled to departments under its command a more diversified having similar purposes, put out his advertisements to seek him out. Later that. The customer must as in many other departments E. A. Cruikshank once everything—renting, at-collections and often act-auctioneer. At the present time, however, the tendency is toward specialties in realty as in other branches. Yet the statement hardly applies to this firm, for its interests are many-sided. It does, however, pay special attention to the management of estates in so far as the invested capital from those estates applies to improved real estate. For instance, the members of the firm will take entire charge of properties, collecting the rents, paying the taxes, securing tenants, making repairs of whatever kind, paying all the bills, keeping the accounts and remitting to the owner at stated times complete statements of the business performed and remitting balances. The ability to



E. A. CRUIKSHANK.



A. W. CRUIKSHANK.



WARREN CRUIKSHANK.

do this successfully is due to a perfected system kept in a high degree of efficiency. The difficulties are vastly enhanced when one considers that the firm has in many cities, on the other side of the ocean, clients, in fact, who have never been in the New-York office.

JOHN T. WILLIAMS.

THE trio of buildings presented in connection with this article are expressive of that era of progress which has made itself so remarkably manifest in the later growth of Greater New-York, and more particularly of Broadway and adjacent streets, in the great mercantile district. There are profoundly interesting examples of the same phase of advancement across the East River and in the upper portions of Manhattan Island; but there once more a different purpose prevails. These three structures need not be separated for consideration, inasmuch as they stand for each other in constructive features. All are built with a steel

was comfort rather than outside adornment. Light is the main desideratum of a perfect office building, or, indeed, of a building of any kind where people are gathered in tenant relationship. In all of these buildings there are no inside rooms. Every one of the offices has an outside window, giving both light



cage which carries the weight of the floors as well as the avoirdupois of the exterior walls. One fact is not observable in their finished state. Throughout the most improved methods of fire-proofing in the choice of material and its use have been employed, and in their interior fittings and conveniences the engineering devices put to use mark a climax in engineering skill and inventive genius. Recently the newspapers have been discussing the feasibility of electric elevators. In the Lord's Court Building and in the Silk Exchange the elevators are electric. In the case of the latter, this is their newest feature, and it is well worthy of study by experts who are constantly on the lookout for innovations on accepted plans. Another thing, in the Lord's Court Building is to be found, possibly, the finest electrical plant in New-York City. It consists of a plant the dynamos of which not only furnish the current for the lighting of the place, but likewise supply the current for operating the elevators. Remarkable to note, the heating of the building is accomplished by utilizing the exhaust steam from the electric plant. It requires no argument to convince business men that this is a source of great economy. In exterior design the three buildings rank with the best that New-York skill in an architectural way has produced, and yet the primary purpose

and air. Together with others from the same hand they stand as representatives of a type of structural strength and durability for which business men and investors are ever searching, and their rapid multiplication in lower Broadway and adjacent streets during the last few years is one of the most marked indications of the city's tremendous growth skyward. They were a necessity, not only because of the rapidly increasing prices of real estate—the increase in prices being due in a marked degree to their appearance—but as well to the fast-growing congestion of the wholesale business for lack of room. A study of the three sketches brings to mind another fact. They were designed and built by John T. Williams, who occupies a unique position in the realty world of the city, in that he is his own designer, builder and owner. Mr. Williams, in his office in the New-York Life Building, at Broadway and Leonard-st., combines all the departments necessary to the conduct of this many-sided business, and, in addition, there is a real estate department, through which all of the property so built upon is rented. Primarily his buildings are put up by himself as an investment; but in fact they find a ready market with investors seeking a permanent lodgement for surplus capital.